

Full Length Research Paper

Communication skills of students in fine arts departments of education faculties

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Communication plays a very important role in music and art teaching as well as in all other teaching fields. The ability to communicate strongly in the mental, emotional, and behavioural areas play an important role in providing students with knowledge and skills. Empathy, empowerment and understanding approach will always be the factors that increase success in collective and individual studies. Successful communication will provide positive contributions to the freedom and self-confidence of students in showing their abilities. Establishing a good connection and making cooperation with the parents and establishing the right communication with other colleagues and administrators will also increase the professional success. In this research study, teacher candidates in Department of Fine Arts (Music and Art Education), Education Faculty, Marmara University Atatürk and their perceptions about communication skills were evaluated. "Communication Skills Inventory" scale was applied to 125 student teachers in total, of which 65 were from the Department of Arts Teacher Education and 60 were selected from the Department of Music Teacher Education. The findings obtained by statistical analysis were analysed. It examined whether the communication skills of the students differ according to their gender, class and education field variables. The collected data were processed in the statistical software (SPSS Statistics 22), the inventory was scored, and a T test was conducted to determine whether the averages of the total inventory and sub-dimensions differed according to the demographic variables. Those belonging to the mental, emotional and behavioral dimensions of the questions were grouped in three parts and the frequency percentages were calculated to evaluate the feedbacks given to the sub-dimensions. The results showed that the communication skills of the students did not differ according to their gender, class and education fields. When the results obtained from the research are examined, it is seen that the communication skills of the teacher candidates in the Music and Arts education branches of Fine Arts Department are at a good level in terms of mental, emotional and behavioural aspects.

Keywords: Music, art, communication, art education and communication.

INTRODUCTION

The word İletişim (in Turkish) is used as "communication" in both English and French. The root of the word comes

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from the Latin "communis" meaning common. It means, "communicating", "doing something together" or "doing something common". This common and well-known act of doing is carried out through thoughts and emotions. Communication is also the exchange of ideas, information and emotions. The emphasis is on "exchange"; exchange includes, giving and receiving. Communication is therefore a two-way process involving the speaker and the listener. (Hasson, 2011:5-6).

Communication is more than chatting, having a conversation, having good relationships, understanding what is being said and giving appropriate reactions. In fact, it is necessary to say that communication is a process that starts and continues with people, even if the person is very different. Man, since his existence had to interact with nature, and cooperate with other humans in order to give a meaning to his surroundings. In this process, the sharing of knowledge and the efforts to produce common meanings naturally brought along the necessity to communicate. The sounds and the things drawn on the walls of the caves became more and more meaningful and systematic common structures over time (Güngör, 2011:36).

During communication, emotions and thoughts are transmitted from the source to the recipient and the recipient opens the message and gives feedback to the source. Elements of communication are source, receiver and message. However, for communication to occur, the message must be coded according to the recipient. Communication Skills come to the fore at this point. The appropriate encoding determines the effectiveness of communication skill level. (Sungur, 2018: 126-138).

The teacher is the person who guides the society and every individual living in the community. Communication is also a source that enables the individual to express himself / herself correctly. This resource provides positive and negative contributions to the future profession for the individual. In other words, the individual uses his communication skills learned from the teacher, his family and his close circle in his profession (Akran et al. 2018: 69-82).

Despite the fact that teachers graduate from higher education institutions with the knowledge and skills required by their teaching, their colleagues, the school rules and role structures are retraining them at the school to which they are appointed. In this process, which can be described as the professional socialization of the teacher, the form of communication that the teacher establishes with colleagues, administrators, parents, etc. may also be reflected in the classroom communication. Classroom experiences, colleagues, teacher organizations, other professional relationships, daily interactions with pupils, parents, and the community may be the active forces that determine the professional socialization of the teacher (Ergen, extracted by Pehlivan in 2005: 17-23).

In their research titled "Investigation of preservice teachers' communication and classroom management skills", (Eriguc, et al., 2013: 46-65) found that communication skills of female students were higher than the communication skills of male students. Communication skills of students who have positive and calm relations with their friends were higher than other students. Other variables were not created on difference on students' communication skills.

In his research examining Communication and Problem-Solving Skills of Students in the Department of Music Education, Kucuk (2012: 33-54) found that communication skills of music teacher candidates are on a good level, while their problem-solving skills are on a low level. Moreover, a high-level positive and significant relationship was found between communication skills and problem-solving skills of students and its sub-dimensions.

In their research, Ozturk and Soyurk (2015: 39-50) inferred that average communication skills points of physical education, music, and art/visual arts teachers are high. As a result of the research conducted by Tunceli (2013: 51-58), it was detected that gender and class variables of teacher candidates don't create a significant difference in their communication skills and attitudes toward the profession. It was determined that there's a low-level significant relationship between the value sub-dimension among sub-dimensions of attitudes toward the teaching profession and communication skills of teacher candidates.

In their research titled "Examination of perception of preservice teachers on communication skills," Ocak and Ersen (2015: 1-19) determined that there's a statistically significant difference in terms of communication skills according to gender, department of study, class level and long-term accommodation unit; while there's no significant difference according to graduated high school, using social networking sites and its frequency. According to the result obtained by the research, it was seen that communication skills perceptions of teacher candidates are on a high level.

In his research titled "Opinions of English teacher candidates about effective communication", Yilmaztekin (2015: 63-77) has asserted that teacher candidates regard communication as a tool.

In his research titled "Effects of the communication skills training program on problem-solving skills perceptions of teacher candidates", Cam (2016: 16-27) has found that the communication skills training program has a positive effect on problem-solving skills perceptions of teacher candidates.

In their research called "The effect of prospective teachers communicative skills on their class management skills", Tan and Tan (2016: 1-14) have concluded that the communication skills of teacher candidates are high.

Communication skills have a very important place in the field of music and art teaching as in other teaching

Table 1. Descriptive analysis table of the study group.

Variable	Group	f	%
Gender	Male	44	35.2
	Female	81	64.8
Year	1	82	65.6
	2	43	34.4
Department	Music	60	48
	Painting	65	52
Total		125	100

fields. The ability to communicate strongly in the mental, emotional, and behavioral areas plays an important role in providing students with the skills such as transferring information and many more. Empathy, empowerment, understanding approaches in collective and individual studies will always be the factors that increase success. Successful communication will provide positive contributions to the freedoms and self-confidence of students when demonstrating their abilities. In addition, establishing good connections with the parents and cooperating with them, establishing the right communications with their colleagues and teachers will increase the professional success. This study analyzed teacher candidates in the Department of Fine Arts Education (Music and Painting Education) and assessed the perceptions of their communication skills.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Model of research

The model of the research was determined as the screening model.

Population and sampling

The present study constitutes the students in the Fine Arts Education Departments of the Education Faculties in the 2017-2018 school year. The sample of the research comprised 125 students who are studying in Marmara University, Atatürk Education Faculty Fine Arts Education Department, Departments of Painting and Music Teacher Education. Details for the working group are given in Table 1.

Data collection

Communication Skills Inventory was originally developed and used by Balci (1996). The first version of this inventory to which necessary validity and reliability practices were conducted is composed of 70 items. The inventory was applied again to a sample of 500 university students. On account of the factor analysis, the number of items was reduced to 45 (Ersanli and Balci, 1998: 7-12). Edited by Ersanli and Balci (1998), the final version of the inventory consists of 45 questions of likert type. The reliability of the inventory was $r = 0.64$ for the reliability study and $r = 0.68$ for

the test repetition. The Inventory measures mental, emotional and behavioral communication skills. The items are answered as "Always", "Usually", "Sometimes", "Rarely", "Never". "Always" is scored as 5, "Never" as 1.

Analysis of data

The collected data were processed in the statistical software (SPSS), the inventory was scored, and a T test was conducted to determine whether the averages of the total inventory and sub-dimensions differed according to the demographic variables. Those belonging to the mental, emotional and behavioral dimensions of the questions are grouped in three parts, and the frequency percentages are calculated to evaluate the feedbacks given to the sub-dimensions.

RESULTS

There was no significant difference in the results of independent group t test $t(-1.55)=123$, $p>0.05$ or $p=0.123$) which was to determine whether the level of communication skills of the students of Fine Arts Education differ according to the gender. According to the findings in Table 2, the communication skills of the students do not differ according to gender. There was no significant difference in the results of the independent group t test, which was conducted to determine whether the level of communication skills of the students of the fine arts education department differed according to the class level they were studying. According to findings in Table 3, the communication skills of the students do not differ according to the class levels.

There was no significant difference in the results of the independent group t test, which was conducted to determine whether the level of communication skills of the students of the fine arts education department differed according to the department they are in. According to findings in Table 4, the communication skills of the students do not differ according to their department. The level of communication skills of the students of the fine arts education department are given on the basis of three sub-dimensions and in general in Table 5. The lowest 15 and the highest 75 points can be earned from the Mental, emotional and behavioral

Table 2. T test for the comparison of communication skill levels of students in fine arts education department by gender.

Groups	n	x	ss	t Test		
				t	sd	p
Female	81	174.87	18.05	-1.55	123	0.12
Male	44	180.00	17.58			

Table 3. T test for the comparison of communication skill levels of students in fine arts education department by their class level.

Groups	n	x	ss	t Test		
				t	sd	p
1st Year	82	177.74	16.16	0.81	123	0.42
2nd Year	43	174.78	21.23			

Table 4. T test for the comparison of communication skill levels of students in fine arts education department by department.

Groups	n	x	ss	t Test		
				t	sd	p
Music	60	173.65	20.20	-1.63	123	0.10
Painting	65	179.28	15.70			

Table 5. Descriptive statistics on communication skills levels / scores of students in fine arts education department.

Scale	n	x	ss
Mental Dimension	125	60.97	6.71
Emotional Dimension	125	57.52	7.63
Behavioral Dimension	125	58.22	6.24
Total	125	176.73	18.02

dimensions and as for the total scale score, one can earn 45 points as the lowest and 225 points the highest. According to Table 6, all 125 students answered 14 out of the 15 questions about the mental dimension of communication skills inventory. Only 1 student did not answer 1 question, the rest of the 124 students did answer. "I try to understand people" is the statement in which the "always"(88 people, 70.4%) option was selected the most. "I try to empathize with the person before me in order to understand their feelings and thoughts"(74 people, 59.2%), "Even if I do not share the same opinion with the other person, I respect their ideas. 71 (56.8%) participants were also mostly selected. This implies that the empathy level of the participants is high.

It is noteworthy that negative statements such as "I think I do not have to listen to the person in front of me." (47 people, 37.6%) and "I might exhibit behaviors that

can possibly ruin my relationship with others." (42 people, 33.6%) were also marked in about a third. According to Table 7, 11 out of the 15 questions about the emotional dimension of communication skills inventory, 125 students answered 100%; and 124 students answered 99.2% for 4 questions. "I feel happy to be understood by the person I communicate with" 63 students (50.4%). "It makes me happy to trust the other person." 60 students (48.0%) "I feel I'm understood by the people I communicate with." 31 students (48.8%) chose the "always" option. There is a positive approach, especially in terms of understanding and trust.

However, for the statement "People believe that I do not pay attention to them" 36 students (28.8%) selected "generally", 32 students (25.6) selected "always" (68 students, 54.4% in total)". For the statement, "I do not like being criticized in general." 26 students (20.8%) selected

Table 6. Frequency analysis of questions and answers regarding the mental dimension.

Variable	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Usually		Always		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
I try to understand people	3	2.4	1	0.8	4	3.2	28	22.4	88	70.4	124	90.2
I do not have any difficulty communicating my thoughts exactly to others.	3	2.4	7	5.6	30	24	39	31.2	46	36.8	125	100
I can give my attention to the interest of the person in front of me.	4	3.2	7	5.6	24	19.2	42	33.6	48	38.4	125	100
I criticize people without hurting their feelings.	1	0.8	4	3.2	24	19.2	39	31.2	55	44	123	98.4
Even if I do not share the same opinion with the other person. I respect their ideas.			5	4.0	13	10.4	36	28.8	71	56.8	125	100
I try to understand if the other person is willing to talk and listen.	2	1.6	6	4.8	14	11.2	44	35.2	59	47.2	125	100
I can easily accept my wrong attitudes and behaviors.	2	1.6	5	4.0	22	17.6	43	34.4	53	42.4	125	100
If the person I am talking to does not understand me. I repeat what I have said. try conveying the message using different words. and summarize it.	3	2.4	6	4.8	19	15.2	43	34.4	54	43.2	125	100
I don't judge even if I don't agree with the thoughts and the feelings of the person before me.	5	4.0	4	3.2	22	17.6	35	28	59	47.2	125	100
I think I do not have to listen to the person in front of me.	13	10.4	9	7.2	24	19.2	31	24.8	47	37.6	125	100
At the end of the discussion. I can accept that the ideas I am defending are wrong.	3	2.4	7	5.6	23	18.4	40	32.0	51	40.8	125	100
I try to understand the problem of the person rather than his/her attitude.	4	3.2	3	2.4	24	19.2	45	36.0	49	39.2	125	100
I might exhibit behaviors that can possibly ruin my relationship with others.	11	8.8	17	13.6	29	23.2	26	20.8	42	33.6	125	100
I pay attention to whether the person in front of me is willing to accept the advice I'm offering.	2	1.6	7	5.6	21	16.8	39	31.2	55	44.0	125	100
I try to empathize with the person before me in order to understand their feelings and thoughts.	1	0.8	5	4.0	13	10.4	32	25.6	74	59.2	125	100

Table 7. Frequency analysis of questions and answers regarding the emotional dimension.

Variable	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Usually		Always		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
I do not like being criticized in general.	13	10.4	30	24.0	26	20.8	26	20.8	30	24.0	125	100
I dream about things while listening to the person before me.	21	16.8	20	16.0	27	21.6	22	17.6	34	27.2	124	99.2
I feel like I get tired while listening to people.	14	11.2	17	13.6	40	32	23	18.4	31	24.8	125	100

Table 7. Contd.

I usually trust people.	13	10.4	7	5.6	21	16.8	31	24.8	53	42.4	125	100
I feel comfortable if the person before me is of the opposite sex.	2	1.6	5	4.0	20	16.0	34	27.2	64	51.2	125	100
It's hard for me to apologize.	23	18.4	19	15.2	24	19.2	33	26.4	25	20.0	124	99.2
I do not like when someone cuts in my speech.	5	4.0	4	3.2	18	14.4	38	30.4	59	47.2	124	99.2
People believe that I do not pay attention to them	17	13.6	12	9.6	27	21.6	36	28.8	32	25.6	124	99.2
I mostly cannot be sure of my feelings.	8	6.4	5	4.0	28	22.4	40	32.0	44	35.2	125	100
I feel happy to be understood by the person I communicate with	4	3.2	9	7.2	1.	10.4	36	28.8	63	50.4	125	100
It makes me happy to trust the other person.	4	3.2	3	2.4	16	12.8	42	33.6	60	48.0	125	100
I welcome every human being with positive expectations.	3	2.4	9	7.2	24	19.2	35	28.0	54	43.2	125	100
I feel I have given something to people I communicate with.	1	0.8	7	5.6	25	20.0	44	35.2	48	38.4	125	100
I do not have any trouble communicating my negative feelings.	7	5.6	4	3.2	20	16.0	42	33.6	52	41.6	125	100
I feel I'm understood by the people I communicate with.	3	2.4	6	4.8	19	15.2	36	28.8	31	48.8	125	100

"usually" and 30 students (24.0) selected "always" (56 students, 44.8% in total). It is observed that there are negative situations such as not paying attention and not liking criticism in terms of communication skills.

According to Table 8, out of the 15 questions about the behavioral dimension of communication skills inventory, 125 students answered 100%. For 3 questions, 124 students answered 99.2% and for the remaining 3 questions, 123 students answered 98.4%.

Here, "I spare enough time to listen to what the people have to say." 68 students (54.4%) answered "I ask questions to better understand the person I listen to." 62 students (49.6%) "I try not to interrupt the person, when listening to them" 62 students (49.6%). For the expression, "I can adjust the tone of my voice according to the feature of the subject." 62 students (49.6%) chose "always". This is an indication of the strong behavioral to be respectful to the person you are communicating with.

However, for the "Despite looking at the person's face, I sometimes do not listen to them." 38 students (30.4%) chose "usually", 26 students (20.8%) chose "always"(64 students in total, 51.2%) and this is noteworthy.

DISCUSSION

When all the evaluations are examined, it is seen that the communication skills perceptions of the teacher candidates in the departments of Fine Arts, Music and

Painting education are at a good mental, emotional and behavioral level. There is a teacher candidate's profile that has high empathy levels that has positive aspects in terms of being understood and trusting others, and that are respectful to others. However, although the rates are low, there are some negative aspects in terms of communication skills. It is gratifying that the findings of the study are generally positive. To further develop the communication skills of the teacher candidates, it would be useful to include communication lessons in the training programs. In addition, seminars should be held in the institutions to raise awareness about the importance of communication skills in the educational process.

Conclusion

Having strong communications' skills will make teacher candidates to be better professionally. It is quite important that they express their thoughts well, transfer subjects in an understandable and correct way, and improve their empathy abilities. Therefore, it would be beneficial to increase activities that would create an awareness in teacher candidates about the importance of communication skills. If new researches are conducted and findings are shared about communication skills, and if training programs that would support communication skills get developed by training program development experts, teacher candidates will be more equipped and qualified, and this will significantly contribute to their

Table 8. Frequency analysis of questions and answers regarding the behavioral dimension.

Variable	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Usually		Always		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
I sincerely listen to the advice and suggestions given by other people.	2	1.6	6	4.8	15	12.0	46	36.8	56	44.8	125	100
When I'm talking. I can make an effective eye contact.	2	1.6	6	4.8	18	14.4	42	33.6	57	45.6	125	100
I spare enough time to listen to what the people have to say.	4	3.2	2	1.6	17	13.6	34	27.2	68	54.4	125	100
I usually do not want to let people speak.	58	46.4	22	17.5	12	9.6	12	9.6	19	15.2	123	98.4
When others talk. I wait patiently. and I do not interrupt them.	6	4.8	7	5.6	21	16.8	34	27.2	55	44.0	123	98.4
I don't hesitate to take the first step in talking.	3	2.4	9	7.2	30	24.0	40	32.0	43	34.4	125	100
I speak clearly. using simple sentences.	3	2.4	6	4.8	26	20.8	38	30.4	51	40.8	124	99.2
Despite looking at the person's face. I sometimes do not listen to them.	7	5.6	22	17.6	30	24.0	38	30.4	26	20.8	123	98.4
I ask questions to better understand the person I listen to.	2	1.6	9	7.2	16	12.8	35	28.0	62	49.6	124	99.2
When I talk to people. I do things that comfort them.	1	0.8	2	1.6	30	24.0	42	33.6	50	40.0	125	100
I try not to interrupt the person while listening to them	2	1.6	8	6.4	13	10.4	39	31.2	62	49.6	124	99.2
I don't hesitate to take the first step when I want to make peace with someone.	7	5.6	11	8.8	20	16.0	39	31.2	48	38.4	125	100
I can adjust the tone of my voice according to the subject.	2	1.6	5	4.0	23	18.4	33	25.4	62	49.6	125	100
I try to control people and fit them into certain molds.	20	16.0	17	13.6	24	19.2	32	25.6	32	25.6	125	100
I do not have any trouble communicating my negative feelings.	7	5.6	4	3.2	20	16.0	42	33.6	52	41.6	125	100

professional success.

interests

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflict of

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